

REMARKS

In the January 6, 2005 Office Action, all of the claims stand rejected in view of prior art. No other objections or rejections are made in the Office Action.

Status of Claims and Amendments

In response to the January 6, 2005 Office Action, none of the claims are being amended by the current Amendment. Thus, claims 1-22 are pending, with claims 1 and 17 being the only independent claims. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following comments.

Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,377,925 to Miyazaki (“Miyazaki patent”). In response, Applicants respectfully disagree with the rejections of the Office Action.

Claims 1-16

More specifically, the Applicants disagree with the Office Action’s assertion that the spool and the spool drive mechanism of the Miyazaki patent function in cooperation with each other without the outer plate portion 3 attached to the attachment frame. As clearly seen in Figure 8, the spool shaft 15 protrudes from the spool 13 toward the outer cover portion 3. Furthermore, as described in column 2, lines 62-66 and column 3, lines 62-66, the outer cover portion 3 is removed to remove the spool 13 from the main body A. Clearly, the outer cover portion 3 of the Miyazaki patent supports the spool shaft 15, and the spool 13 would be ***inoperable*** once the outer cover portion 3 is removed. This is clearly contrary to the requirement of claim 1.

It is well settled under U.S. patent law that for a reference to anticipate a claim, the reference must disclose each and every element of the claim within the reference. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is not anticipated by the prior art of record. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Moreover, Applicants believe that dependent claims 2-16 are also allowable over the prior art of record in that they depend from independent claim 1, and are therefore allowable for the reasons stated above. Thus, Applicants believe that since the prior art of record does not anticipate independent claim 1, neither does the prior art anticipate dependent claims 2-16.

Appl. No. 10/656,137
Amendment dated April 5, 2005
Reply to Office Action of January 6, 2005

Claims 17-22

Regarding claim 17, it is not clear from the Office Action which structures of the Miyazaki patent the Office Action deems correspond to the first and second cover members and the first through fourth side plates. Applicants particularly believe that the Miyazaki patent does not disclose or suggest the first and second cover members and the third and fourth side plates. Thus, Applicants believe that the Miyazaki patent does not disclose or suggest the arrangement of claim 17.

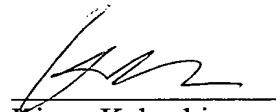
Accordingly, Applicants also believe that dependent claims 18-22 are also allowable over the prior art of record in that they depend from independent claim 17. Thus, Applicants believe that since the prior art of record does not anticipate independent claim 17, neither does the prior art anticipate dependent claims 18-22.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections.

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In view of the foregoing amendment and comments, Applicants respectfully assert that claims 1-22 are now in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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